

Minutes of the Veneta City Council

March 27, 2006

Council: Mayor T. J. Brooker, Darrell Carman, Thomas Cotter, and Marion Esty

Other: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Sheryl Hackett, City Recorder; Margaret Boutell, Community Services Director, Mona Linstromberg; Craig Harbison; Cathy Coulson-Keegan; William Wright; Chuck Standiford; Sharon Hobart-Hardin; Jessica Cotter, Veneta Pool Manager; and Jeneca Jones & Rob Lafferty, West Lane News

Mayor Brooker called the Veneta City Council to order at 7:15 p.m.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mona Linstromberg; 87140 Territorial Road; Veneta, OR

Mona said she attended the last meeting where the City discussed purchasing ODOT right-of-way on Territorial Road, stating that is was a gateway to Veneta. She said the gateway to Veneta is at Hwy 126 and Jack Kelley Drive. She said removing the trees and filling the Larson property will set the way to develop west of that property without on-site mitigation. She said Hayden Homes chose to do on-site mitigation rather than mitigate in the Amazon Mitigation Bank. She said that is something Kay Larson could have done; but, she wants to pave a large area to accommodate large SUVs. Mona said once Kay does that, it opens the way to do the same on the other 14 to 18 acres. She said a comprehensive plan should be developed for the Jack Kelley Drive area. She said the findings state that the road was built for commercial development; however, the utilities to serve that development are not there yet. She said that is misinformation. She said the City has hired a firm to do a Downtown Development plan. She said at the last meeting one of the consultants said the character of Veneta is its wetlands. Mona said once those wetlands are filled the character of Veneta will be lost.

William Wright; 25130 E. Broadway; Veneta, OR

Mr. Wright said he agrees with what Mona said and it will be the citizens that will have to live with the decisions the Council makes. LUBA asked the City for more information about the adverse impacts of the Larson development. He said he did not feel they did that and he does not feel LUBA is getting what it asked for. He said they could have reopened the record.

Cathy Coulson-Keegan; 25130 E. Broadway; Veneta, OR

Ms. Coulson-Keegan said she has a vision for Veneta that it can be developed in a way that saves wetlands. The way to save wetlands is to enhance them with native wetland plants. She said she is familiar with Japanese gardens throughout the world and she envisions the wetlands along Jack Kelley Drive to be developed in a similar way which could create a gateway to the City. She envisions something similar to Venice with water canals, culture, arts, and buildings working together. She asked the Council to look for a better way of dealing with wetlands than filling them. She said a landscape architect could design something that would create a cultural pull to Veneta that would encourage people traveling to the coast to stop. She said Jack Kelley Drive is a perfect place for a wetland park. She said it absorbs water from Veneta and does what a wetlands is supposed to do. If the weeds were cleared out and native plants put in it could be beautiful. She said she can envision

shopping centers developed around the wetlands.

Greg Demers; 24244 Sertic Road; Veneta, OR

Mr. Demers said he disagrees with the comments about Jack Kelley Drive. He said he does not see the culture or character of Veneta as wetlands at all.

4. CONSENT AGENDA (taken out of order)

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Marion Esty seconded the motion.

Vote: Marion Esty, aye; Thomas Cotter, aye; Mayor Brooker, aye; and Darrell Carman, aye

The consent agenda as approved included minutes for March 15, 2006, bills paid and payable for February/March 2006, and the Civic Calendar for April 2006.

2. PUBLIC HEARING (Postponed):

The Planning Commission postponed making a recommendation on the proposed Greenway Subzone amendments until their meeting on April 3, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.; therefore, the City Council Public Hearing has been postponed until Monday, April 24, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at Veneta City Hall

3. PUBLIC HEARING

Amendments to the Veneta Transportation System Plan

- a. Open Hearing: Mayor Brooker opened the public hearing at 7:26 p.m.
- b. Declaration of Conflict of Interest or Ex-Parte Contacts: None
- c. Staff Report (Margaret Boutell)

Margaret advised the Council that at their March 7, 2006 meeting the Planning Commission made a recommendation to the Council that the Veneta Transportation System Plan (TSP) amendments be adopted. She said the proposed amendments better balance the City's goals of protecting natural resources and providing a good transportation system. The amendments also include updated project descriptions and priorities. She said the amendments are the result of the East Veneta Study that was funded by the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and the Oregon Department of Transportation's Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) program. City staff and a citizen's committee evaluated four different street system scenarios to determine where the appropriate wetland crossings for street connectivity should be. Each scenario was run through a transportation model. It was determined that the existing TSP, minus two crossings for local streets, was the best scenario. The proposed maps show the removal of one of the Jake Street crossings and the removal of the connection of Ponderosa and Cherry. The proposed amendments were sent to other agencies for review.

In response to a question from Mayor Brooker, Margaret said there is a list of criteria which determine when a traffic impact analysis is required.

Margaret explained the changes in appendix A are the result of the new street

assessment prepared by the City Engineer in 2004.

Staff recommended that the Council adopt the findings and direct staff to prepare an adopting ordinance for the Transportation System Plan as revised and with the changes suggested by DLCD to move the OR 126 Access Management project from a long range to a high priority project and to delete the reference to the Region 2050 Planning Project because it is not a City project.

d. Public Testimony

Mona Linstromberg; 87140 Territorial Road; Veneta, OR

Mona said there isn't anything in the plan that addresses street standards for the wetland crossings. She said she had asked the Planning Commission to consider including a requirement for some type of bridging standards.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Margaret said the City doesn't have a strict standard and the City Engineer would be the one that would review the design submitted for the crossing. At the present time, it has been done on a case-by-case basis. She said the Council would need to amend the code if they want to establish a specific standard.

Darrell Carman said the Transportation System Plan is a general plan and not the place to set a standard. He said his concern would be that establishing a strict standard would not allow the City to consider designs that may be better. In response, Mona said they could set a minimum standard.

The Council agreed that design standards are something they should address at a future time.

e. Questions from the Veneta City Council: None

f. Close of Public Hearing: Mayor Brooker closed the public hearing at 7:58 p.m.

g. Deliberation and Decision

Staff said the Council may approve the plan and map changes based on the findings and conclusions in the proposed final order, modify the proposed findings, deny the plan based on findings of fact, or postpone making a decision until another date and time. If the Council approves the plan and map changes, staff recommends they direct staff to prepare an adopting ordinance to be considered at next meeting.

(1) Adopt Findings of Fact

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to approve the amendments to the Transportation System Plan, to adopt the findings of fact, and direct staff to prepare an adopting ordinance. Darrell Carman seconded the motion which passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

5. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a. FROM MAYOR/COUNCILORS

- (1) Report on law enforcement activities, Sgt. Harrold LCSO
Sgt. Harrold reported that a new interior lock was installed on the Sheriff's Office door as a requirement of the National Crime Information Computer program. He also informed the Council that he has received confirmation from the State that Veneta is slated to receive one of the new Breathalyzer units. He said he has met with Oregon Country Fair to get a jump start on making sure everyone is communicating and meeting requirements for having an acceptable level of public safety. He said one of the things he is working on with OCF is a contract for onsite personnel from LCSO that allows deputies to patrol around the area. He said the traffic team may have grant funds similar to last year for patrolling the area during the fair.

- (2) Appointment of new Budget Committee members
The Budget Committee has three vacant positions. The City received three applications and a fourth from Mona Turner who indicated verbally that she would prefer not to be reappointed but would if needed.

Mayor Brooker appointed Gino Galioto, Keyte Hladky, and Keith Weiss to the Budget Committee.

- (3) Appointment of Strategic Planning Committee
Ric said there was a good response to a request for members. He said the group will be made up of people with different areas of interest; however, there is no one from the agricultural or medical fields and few from the educational field. The Strategic Planning Action Committee has recommended appointing all 36 people that have agreed to participate. Ric said the committee is intended to be a Fern Ridge group with the City being the host and the facilitator of funds; therefore, he recommended appointing only two of the three Councilor's that applied to avoid having a quorum. The third Councilor could be appointed as an alternate.

The Council agreed to extend the deadline for members to the end of the week. They also agreed that Mayor Brooker and Thomas Cotter would be appointed to the committee and Marion Esty will serve as an alternate.

Mayor Brooker appointed all 36 people who applied for the Strategic Planning Committee, all who submit an application by the end of this week, himself and Thomas Cotter, and Marion Esty as an alternate.

The first meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee is scheduled for April 6, 2006 at 6:00 p.m.

- (4) Policy Discussion on Mail Received at City Hall
Mayor Brooker said Marion expressed some issues at the last meeting about how mail received at the City is handled. He said he would like to ask the other Councilors for their opinion. Currently all mail received is opened and date stamped. Marion expressed concern with Peer Court mail being opened in this same way. Mayor Brooker said Peer Court has been asked to change

their address for mail they feel is too sensitive to be opened by City staff.

Mayor Brooker said the question is whether or not the Council wants to change current policy. Marion said she has no objection to whatever policy the other Councilors want to set.

By consensus the Council agreed to follow current policy but hold Peer Court mail aside and ask them to change their address.

b. COUNCIL/COMMITTEE LIAISONS

Mayor Brooker said as a result of Fred's resignation he will be reassigning some of the Council liaison positions. He said he would like to give Council members the opportunity to change liaison positions so they can get a different perspective on things.

6. STAFF REPORTS

a. FINANCE DIRECTOR

(1) Year-End Financial Report (2004/05)

Finance Director Jerri Moore said the year-end financial report contains pre-audit figures but she does not anticipate any major changes. She said it's been quite awhile since the Council has received any financial information; therefore, she thought it would be helpful for the Council to have the information even though it is not yet current. In response to a request from Mayor Brooker, Jerri reviewed the report with them. She explained that normally some budget transfers would have been done by supplemental budgets; however, that was not done due to the Finance Director vacancy. She said the audit report will reflect that; however, it is not that unusual because of the circumstances the City faced. She said she does not anticipate any significant negative outcomes with the State.

Jerri said she is finally making headway on getting caught up for the current fiscal year.

(2) Revised Budget Committee Calendar

Due to a conflict with other meetings, Jerri presented the Council with a revised Budget Committee calendar. The first meeting is scheduled for Tuesday May 2, 2006 and the second meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 16, 2006.

b. COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

(1) Evaluation of Pool Fees

Margaret introduced returning Pool Manager Jessica Cotter. Margaret advised the Council that the last increase in swimming pool fees was in June of 1999. She presented a schedule showing current fees, fees with a 15% increase, and fees with a 30% increase. The schedule also included the expenditures and revenue for the 2004/05 fiscal year. With current rates the pool only recovered 34% of operating costs. Even with an increase in fees the pool will not recover the full costs of operations. She asked the Council to

make a decision on whether or not to increase fees this year and, if so, at what rate.

In response to a question from Marion Esty, Margaret said the Mid-Lane Community Chest receives funding from United Way for scholarships. Not all of that money was used last year. Information about the scholarships is included in the annual pool schedule and publication.

Thomas Cotter said it would be helpful to have the attendance records. He said he understands that the pool loses money; however, he doesn't want to lose sight of the City's goal of providing a safe place for kids to swim. He said it is very important that children learn to swim.

Pool Manager Jessica Cotter encouraged the Council to keep the swim lesson fees as low as possible. Currently lessons cost \$25.00 per session and she recommended not increasing them to more than \$30.00. She said most families have multiple children and the cost of lessons becomes an issue.

Mayor Brooker agreed that swim lessons are important and he would like to keep the lesson fee as low as possible.

Ric said small incremental increases each year are better than large increases at one time. He pointed out that about 50% of the people using the pool are non-residents.

Darrell Carman said he feels the cost increase to benefit ratio is very slim.

Marion said she doesn't want to discourage people from using the pool.

The Council asked staff to revisit the pool fees. The majority said they would like to see the rates for children stay the same, swim lesson fees be based on inside City and out-of-city rates, and not have fees so high it would discourage kids from using the pool.

(2) Parks SDC Notice

Margaret said they are close to being ready to give the 90-day notice that starts the process of adopting a new Parks SDC. She said they hope to bring a draft Capital Improvement Project list to the Council by the end of April. In response to a question, she said LCOG will be asked to develop the methodology.

c. CITY ADMINISTRATOR

(1) ODDA Downtown Development Plan update

Ric said the second meeting resulted in as many questions as answers due to the complexity of the issues. There is some concern as to whether W. Broadway can compete with the three or four nodes of existing commercial development. ODDA needs some direction. In his memorandum, Dan has laid out several scenarios. It has become evident that they cannot take a cookie cutter approach as to where Veneta's downtown will be located and what it will look like. Veneta has some unique development constraints in the

fact it is divided into four quadrants by Hwy 126, the Railroad, and Territorial Road. Another challenge is the fact that public facilities are scattered rather than being centrally located.

Darrell said he came away from the last meeting feeling that the City is spending a lot of money but not getting much for it.

Ric said the ODDA group has realized that Veneta has some huge issues to address.

Mayor Brooker said part of the problem is the public seems to envision something different than what the City had in mind. He said a lot of what he has heard from the public is they want the plan to take into account the entire area and not just the City. He said that is outside the City's ability to do. He said he likes the scenario of performance based development standards. He agreed that ODDA came away with more questions than answers and that Veneta has some very complex attributes that do not fit into a traditional downtown development project. He said Veneta cannot solve all of the problems because of limited resources.

Marion agreed that performance based development standards would be the most reasonable approach based on the budget.

Darrell Carman asked if that was the scope of work they were hired to do.

Ric said ODDA has spent about 1/3 of the resources and they are looking for feedback. They said they can develop a plan with an emphasis on performance standards and at the same time they can give a blueprint of where the downtown would be located. He said it is not the level of master planning he would have expected. In response to a question, he said the contract can be amended.

Mayor Brooker said he feels they should scale down the Town Hall meetings and instead put together a committee that can give ODDA some better direction.

Thomas Cotter said he agrees with performance standards but he still has questions as to how the town will be tied together. He said he is concerned that if they stray too far from W. Broadway they will lose the area that ties the City's businesses to its residential areas. He said he is more interested in finding ways to connect the City through a downtown and making sure the older area of town does not become blighted. He said he doesn't feel it is necessary that the downtown be a gateway area as much as an area that ties the community together.

Mayor Brooker said he does not want to abandon W. Broadway, he just doesn't believe they can push all of the commercial activity to that area.

Thomas Cotter said W. Broadway shouldn't have to compete with the other

commercial areas, it should attract businesses by being unique.

Mayor Brooker said by asking ODDA to concentrate more on performance standards, they won't be asking them to eliminate any areas or force commercial development into any specific area.

Chuck Standiford said the City shouldn't be expecting W. Broadway to draw people off of Hwy 126. He said the businesses on W. Broadway should cater more to the people that live here. He said the City should try to encourage the development of smaller businesses in that area.

Darrell said if prices are competitive, he believes people will shop in Veneta rather than drive 15 miles into town.

Sharon Hobart-Hardin said she has been impressed with Mary's ideas for Economic Development but was a little disappointed in the material presented by ODDA. She said it seemed to be a rehash of what has gone on in other communities and then applied to Veneta.

Mayor Brooker said he got the impression that ODDA is floundering.

Cathleen Coulson-Keegan said in her travels the things that she feels tie communities together are the fact that services are centrally located.

William Wright wants to see Veneta grow as a place where businesses like Our Daily Bread can thrive. He said a lot of thought needs to be given to create a nice environment. He said Veneta needs some standards for businesses and homes to make sure the construction holds up over time.

Darrel Carman said it might be that Veneta's vision is not big enough. He said the way to make a downtown successful is making it attractive for businesses. If the City really wants to develop a downtown they may be more successful by buying up all the lots on W. Broadway and making them shovel ready. He said they could zero in on a small area but make some big investments that would have a long term return.

7. OTHER

a. City Administrator Contract Changes

Mayor Brooker pointed out that proposed changes to the City Administrator's contract are in bold text. Changes include increasing the severance for termination from two months to three months, adjusting the salary by a 3% merit increase, including an annual COLA, allowing the sale of up to three weeks of accrued leave, and increasing the deferred retirement contribution by the City from 1% to 3%. If approved as written, the contract would be renewed for two more years.

MOTION: Darrell Carman made a motion to renew the City Administrator's contract with the changes as presented. Thomas Cotter seconded the motion which passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

Employee Evaluation Form: Darrell Carman said he would like the Council to consider revising the employee evaluation form. He said one category is "exceeds expectations" and he does not feel people should be evaluated on having to exceed what is expected of them. Thomas Cotter said he agrees that the grading system makes it difficult. Mayor Brooker asked Darrell Carman to fill Fred's vacancy on the employee negotiation committee and work with the employees on making revisions. He agreed the form could be improved.

Ric said the form works pretty well for employees; however, it was not designed for a City Administrator. He said there is a level of expectation for employees; however, employees can exceed what is expected. He said employees exceed expectations when they take on and complete work above and beyond their minimum assignments. He said it can also be based on the quality of work performed.

Mayor Brooker agreed that a new form should be developed for the City Administrator position.

- b. Downtown Development: Cathleen Coulson-Keegan asked what advantage it is to the City to allow a variance for a development on Jack Kelley Drive. She said it seems counter-productive to making Territorial and W. Broadway Veneta's downtown area. In response, Ric said the developer is being allowed to develop the property in the way it was zoned.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSIONS


- a. ORS 192-660(2)(h) - Consult with legal counsel regarding litigation likely to be filed.

Mayor Brooker adjourned the Council into executive session at 9:45 p.m. Having made no decisions, the Council returned to regular session at 10:57 p.m.

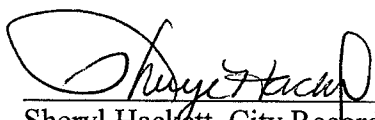
MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to accept an offer from Swanson Lumber Company regarding a tree cutting issue, to direct the City Attorney to prepare a settlement agreement, and to authorize Ric to sign the agreement on behalf of the City. Marion Esty seconded the motion which passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

9. ADJOURN

Mayor Brooker adjourned the City Council at 10:00 p.m.


T. J. Brooker, Mayor

ATTEST:


Sheryl Hackett, City Recorder